

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 33, line 15, with the following substitute paragraph:

--Human monocytic THP-1 cells at exponential growth phase were exposed to 1 µg/ml of LPS, 1 µM of Meisoindigo, or 1 µg/ml of LPS plus 1 µM of Meisoindigo for 24 hours. The cells were then harvested, washed and total RNA extracted for real time PCR assay. Total RNA (300 ng) was treated with DNase I (Promega, Madison, WI), and SuperScript II (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA) and oligo(dT) were used for reverse transcription according to the manufacturers' instructions. Real-time PCR reactions were performed in a 25-µL volume containing diluted cDNA, Sybr Green PCR Master Mix (Applied Biosystems), and 2.5 µM each IL-6 gene-specific primer: R: 5'- TCAATTCGTTCTGAAGAGG (SEQ ID NO. 1) and F: 5'- CCCCCAGGAGAAGATTCC (SEQ. ID NO. 2). An ABI SDS7700 analyzer (Applied Biosystems) was used at 50°C for 2 minutes and 95°C for 10 minutes, followed by 40 cycles at 95°C for 15 seconds and 60°C for 1 minute. Test cDNA results were normalized to HPRT internal control measured on the same plate. After cycling, the specificity of amplification was validated by the generation of a melting curve through slow denaturation of the PCR products and then by gel electrophoresis. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 34, line 31, with the following substitute paragraph:

--The effect of Meisoindigo on the transcription of TNF-α (RNA levels) was determined by a technique of real time PCR using the same procedures described in Example 2, except the specific primers for TNF-α were used as follows: 5'-TGCCCAG-ACTCGGCAAAG (SEQ. ID NO. 3), and 5'GGAGAAGGGTGACCGACT (SEQ. ID NO. 4). Total RNA was extracted using a Qiagen Rneasy minit kit, and the HPRT gene was used as internal control. --